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ABSTRACT

The underrepresentation of Mexican Americans in Texas higher education is a major challenge facing the state's leaders. In Texas the growing Mexican American population will constitute the majority of the labor force in 20 to 30 years. The only way to insure a healthy and productive economy for Texas in the future is to invest now in the education of this labor force. The educational attainment of Mexican Americans is falling in proportion to their share of the population growth since 1965. Participation rates for Mexican Americans on college and university faculties are also falling. These trends must be reversed. Community colleges are in a position to offer valuable educational services if their leaders recognize and respond to the needs of the Mexican American community. Statewide articulation policies are needed to guarantee that students can transfer without penalty from 2- to 4-year institutions. Remedial and compensatory programs and the open admission policy should continue. Leaders in higher education must take action to increase the representation of Mexican Americans in higher education--as students, faculty members, and decision makers. This report includes 63 specific recommendations for educational policy related to the issues of participation, community college role, articulation, remedial education, and governance. (JHZ)

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A Report Presented to
The Texas Select Committee on Higher Education
Austin, Texas, June 13, 1986

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TEXAS ASSOCIATION OF CHICANOS IN HIGHER EDUCATION
"A Professional Association Committed to the Improvement of Educational Opportunities for Americans of Mexican Ancestry."

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El Paso Community College
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The Mexican-Americans and Texas Higher Education

INTRODUCTION

The Texas Association of Chicanos in Higher Education (TACHE) was founded in 1974 to address the development of Mexican-Americans at all levels of post-secondary education in Texas. From its inception TACHE has taken the lead role in identifying and addressing policy issues which mitigate for or against the educational progress of its constituency. Among its many noteworthy undertakings are:

- The development of a permanent endowment fund which supports the pursuit of graduate and post-graduate research agenda by Chicano scholars;
- The publication of a quarterly newsletter which is disseminated widely throughout Texas and the Southwest;
- Participation as a party in the Adams litigation which resulted in the Texas Higher Education Opportunity Plan;
- Convenor of an annual conference which addresses timely issues of concern to the higher education community;
- Co-sponsor with the American Council of Education in 1984 of a regional seminar on the status of minorities in higher education; and
- Co-sponsor with the Texas Coordinating Board of a select statewide committee which addressed the issues surrounding the retention and attrition status of Mexican-American students in Texas.

The creation of the Texas Select Committee on Higher Education, with its purpose to seek information from various sources, has provided TACHE with another opportunity to represent the view of its 400 members. It is our position that the Mexican-American community has for too long been ignored and thus, underrepresented in Texas higher education. Only recently have Hispanics begun to gain access to higher education and its benefits.

The Select Committee will be helping to shape the policy for Texas higher education during the 21st century and beyond. It is our contention that the Mexican-American community must take an active and visible role in helping to frame these policies. For this reason TACHE places before this Committee and other policymakers a series of policy perspectives, issues, and recommendations for their review and serious consideration.

A DEMOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS

Influencial Texans will be making far-reaching and long-term policy and legislative recommendations which will affect access to postsecondary education for Texans. It is apparent that potential policy issues will come forth from information and data received by the Select Committee on Higher Education during its tenure of hearing testimony on the higher education needs of our State. The challenging agenda facing Texas is an urgent one. It is one in which new priorities will emerge; where more, not less, education will be needed, and where access to higher education must remain a high priority for all regardless of social, cultural, or economic background. Texas is witnessing significant and profound demographic shifts in the ethnic and racial composition of its school-age and potential college-age population. An intense examination of demographic projections, as they relate to the future of Texas, are so compelling that their implications for developing our human resources become critical. One such challenge is that of confronting the issue of the underrepresentation of Mexican-Americans in Texas higher education when compared to their numerical representation relative to the total population. Perhaps no other policy issue presents a greater challenge for Texas than one which clearly addresses the need to increase the proportion of Mexican-Americans accessing higher education and reversing those patterns of underrepresenta-

tion. If Texas is going to profit from the workforce of the future, clearly then the Select Committee must address the educational needs of Mexican-Americans since these young people are precisely those who have been least served by the educational system.

What is emerging in Texas, and throughout the Southwest, is a growing Hispanic population (largely Mexican-American) which will constitute the bulk of the labor force twenty to thirty years from now. Educational resource investment becomes critical now in order for the benefits of this investment to accrue in the future. The level of education of the population will be a significant factor in determining the productivity of our workforce and achieving full participation in society and the Texas economy of the future.

The first policy issue therefore ought to be one which views the population of the State as a natural resource which necessitates investment and development to yield positive results. Texas would be well served if the Select Committee on Higher Education addressed policy issues which will maximize the potential contributions of the escalating numbers of Hispanics in the population. The demographic data are compelling. Forty-six percent of the 1985-86 public school enrollment in Texas is minority. Previous policies like "benign neglect," when 10 percent of the State's youth was minority, are no longer reasonable nor acceptable.

How can we expect to neglect 46 percent of our youth? It is imperative for the Select Committee and the higher education community to do everything in their power to assure that the largest possible number of minority students do well in public school and become eligible for college. The motives of policymakers on this issue should not be political. These justifications died with the sixties; instead the motives should emanate out of sheer self-interest and what is best for the future of Texans.

Let's examine the demographic findings which support the educational agenda confronting postsecondary education in Texas:

- Mexican-Americans accounted for 21 percent of the total population of Texas in 1980, but they accounted for more than 30 percent of the 0-4 age group.

- By 2000, nearly 40 percent of the age 0-4 population is projected to be of Mexican-American origin.

- Data suggest that Mexican-Americans have higher high school attrition rates than Blacks or Anglos and tend to leave school earlier. For example, the number of Mexican-American high school graduates in Spring 1983 was approximately 60 percent the size of Mexican-American enrollment in the ninth grade of Fall 1979, compared with 74.5 percent and 63.2 percent respectively for Anglos and Blacks.

- High school graduation rates in Texas are similar to nationwide figures which show 83 percent of Anglo students completing high school from 1973 to 1979, compared with 72 percent of Black students and 55 percent of Mexican-Americans.

- National data suggest that smaller percentages of students from low-income families enroll in postsecondary educ̨ation than students from medium- and high-income families. In Texas, relatively higher percentages of Mexican-origin families earned less than $15,000 in 1979.

- Present enrollment and earned degree patterns show considerable underrepresentation (relative to their proportions in the college-age population—aged 20-29) for Mexican-Americans at all levels of postsecondary education.

- From 1976 to 1981, Mexican-Americans experienced greater than average declines in degrees awarded at the associate, master's, and doctoral levels and greater than average increases at the bachelor's and first professional levels but still are underrepresented.

In summary, the greatest population growth in the next twenty years will take place among the minority populations, whose rates of postsecondary educational attainment and socioeconomic status have been low historically.

The preceding data no doubt raise a number of policy questions on the educational needs of Mexican-Americans in Texas. Many of these questions revolve around issues such as educational equity, resource allocation, age-race stratification, and social cohesion.

This unprecedented growth clearly demonstrates that access to collegiate study must remain a high priority if we are to arrest the continuous loss of human potential. Our greatest strength as a State, and ultimately as a nation, is our people. Education is our greatest investment in the future of our State and parity in access is a must for all citizens.

ISSUES OF PARTICIPATION

Frank Newman (1985) claims that Mexican-Americans are proportionally worse off now than they were twenty years ago when their participation in higher education is measured against their present and emerging demographic growth and development. The number of degrees earned by Mexican-Americans is actually falling in proportion to their share of the growth in the Texas population since 1965. This situation is also true when one evaluates the participation rates of Mexican-Americans on college and university faculties and "hard-money" staff/administrative positions.

The following are some of the major issues and policy considerations and recommendations which TACHE would like to place before the Select Committee and others when they address the issues surrounding Mexican-American participation in all facets of Texas higher education.

Student Related Issues:

- That Mexican-Americans are the majority minority in Texas and that their numbers are growing at a 6.9 percent annual rate and at least at a 1.3 percent greater rate than any other population group in Texas (Dolman and Kaufman, 1984; Valdivieso, 1985).

- That Mexican-Americans are staying too long in community colleges and that their transfer rates to upper divison institutions is not representative of the number which pursues higher education every year (Newman, 1985).

- That Mexican-Americans are not obtaining a representative number of bachelor degrees relative to the percentage of their participation in higher education (Dolman and Kaufman, 1984; Brown et al, 1980; Orum, 1985).

- That there is no systematic intra-agency cooperation at the state governance level between Texas Education Agency and the Texas Coordinating Board, thus, there is no common educational agency addressing the needs of Mexican-Americans from elementary to postsecondary education (Acevedo, 1985).

- That there does not exist a comprehensive and coordinated plan for increasing and monitoring the development of Mexican-American students as they proceed through each level of the educational ladder. Each is currently operating as if its individual outcomes (or lack thereof) have no consequences for the others.

- That most Mexican-American students lack the prerequisite high school courses necessary for college admissions.

- That the number of Mexican-American students taking college admissions exams is not increasing.

- That Mexican-Americans have many unmet financial aid needs which are not being adequately addressed by the present system.

- That the student (of undocumented workers/parents) situation, which forced the public school access ruling by the federal courts, may have to be addressed by the State on behalf of its colleges and universities.

Faculty Related Issues:

- That the number of Mexican-American professionals participating in Texas colleges and universities in tenure track and "hard money" staff positions is not reflective of their demographic representation within Texas. The number of tenured Mexican-American faculty is actually lower now than it was ten years ago. Also, as federally funded programs have diminished so have the number of Mexican-American administrators in Texas IHE's.

- That the Texas Higher Education Opportunity Plan is not being adequately monitored or enforced by the U.S. Office of Civil Rights or effectively evaluated for policy and program implications by the Texas Coordinating Board, nor implemented by most Texas institutions of higher education.

- That there is a lack of uniformity in the enforcement of affirmative action compliance across the State's higher education system.

- That the graduate and professional schools in the State are not training, nurturing, and graduating potential Mexican-American faculty to meet the emerging needs of the existing institutions.

- That the amount of targeted financial resources for increasing the number of Mexican-Americans pursuing academic careers via graduate programs is inadequate.

- That institutions of higher education in Texas are naive and void of any appreciation for the community development burdens which are placed on Mexican-American faculties for which there is no "tenure value."

- That the majority faculties and staff in Texas colleges and universities are not sensitive to the culturally and socially pluralistic society which exists in the State.

Student **Related Recommendations:**

- That the funding formulas for Texas colleges and universities be amended to include an "attrition penalty" for those institutions showing a high "minority non-persistence rate" and a "retention bonus" for those institutions showing progress in the rate of minority persisters in their various programs. Recent data (Brown et al, 1980), indicate a high enrollment concentration at the freshman levels for Mexican-Americans but low participation rates at the upper division levels and graduate/ professional schools. It appears that Texas colleges and universities are doing more to recruit Mexican-Americans than keep them but once on campus fail to effectively get them beyond the freshman and sophomore levels.

- That the Coordinating Board and the Texas Education Agency be mandated to maintain a comprehensive demographic data base which consists of all timely data on Mexican-American students at all levels of education. There is no such system at present which may provide data for policy and research endeavors.

- That the Texas Education Agency and the Coordinating Board should require all community colleges and the corresponding high school districts to maintain targeted programs which focus on the Mexican-American high school students.

- That the Texas Coordinating Board should seek an opinion from the Attorney General or prepare legislation to respond to the emerging issues surrounding access to higher education by undocumented alien students who have graduated from Texas high schools.

- That the Texas Coordinating Board establish staffing formulas to support outreach endeavors of community colleges to minority populations in their service areas.

- That graduate programs in Texas colleges and universities be required to maintain admissions programs for students whose graduate exam scores fall short of the requirements but who have other academic and professional characteristics which support graduate study.

- That all senior colleges maintain articulation plans with community colleges to enhance Mexican-

American transfer.

- That the Coordinating Board should develop an evaluation system which routinely and systematically assesses the various college and university programs in order to identify effective admission practices and retention strategies for Mexican-Americans.

- That all major senior institutions establish a fellowship program to support outstanding Mexican-American baccalaureate recipients who wish to pursue advanced programs of study as a step toward a career in higher education.

Faculty/Staff Related Recommendations:

- That the Commissioner of the Texas Coordinating Board convene a statewide committee which addresses the issue of Mexican-American underrepresentation in professional ranks in Texas higher education.

- That there be a clearinghouse established by the Texas Coordinating Board which identifies and supplies an updated list of Mexican-American faculty and staff to all Texas colleges and universities on a timely basis.

- That both the Coordinating Board and the Texas Education Agency establish standing Mexican-American Education Councils which are charged with providing input to the development of statewide programs directed toward improving the education of Mexican-Americans. These Councils should be composed of students, parents, faculty, staff, and community leaders.

- That the Pre-Professional Skills Test be revoked as an exclusionary instrument and that an exam be developed which serves a more functional career orientation and counseling purpose for the Mexican-American students planning to pursue careers in education.

- That the State set aside training grants which are directed toward increasing the number of bilingual and bi-cultural teachers seeking teaching certificates.

- That all Texas colleges and universities be required to report, on an annual basis, to the Coordinating Board how many Mexican-American faculty/staff were recruited, tenured, and promoted.

- That all tenure track positions in Texas colleges and universities have a specific and formative plan by which the institution plans to support and nurture the tenureability of each minority faculty member that is hired.

- That the involvement of Mexican-American faculty in community development activities which address minority communities be counted toward tenure and merit increments.

- That all colleges and universities should provide the necessary fiscal support to their faculty development programs in order to make it possible to grant up to 100 percent release time to Mexican-American faculty and administrators to complete tenure value research, terminal degree study, or post-graduate pursuits in new fields.

- That the State Legislature Board establish a post-doctoral fellows program that would enable Mexican-American junior faculty to pursue tenure track research.

- That the Coordinating Board develop an Administrative Fellows Program which identifies and nurtures Mexican-Americans who are interested in pursuing careers in educational administration in post-secondary education.

COMMUNITY COLLEGE OCCUPATIONAL EDUCATION

Historically, a disproportional number of Mexican-Americans leave high school without receiving a high school diploma. This problem is more apparent today as the percentage of Mexican-American students in elementary schools increases, but the percentage graduating remains small. Many of those completing

high school do so with low grades, with little awareness of the process of entering post-secondary institutions, and with limited financial resources. Furthermore, Mexican-American high school students are generally directed to pursue the general education track. Given this scenario, the result is a small pool of Mexican-American students available to pursue post-secondary education.

Community colleges are important to Mexican-Americans in Texas due to their strategic locations, their flexibility to meet community needs, and their availability of resources. They are in a position to provide educational services to Mexican-Americans who, in large numbers, are found in the lower end of most standards, be they educational, economic, or social. If community colleges were to adopt a community development orientation, they could use occupational education programs as a catalyst for economic and human resource development and begin to address this societal malady.

How can community colleges participate in this development? The first step must be a recognition by community college leaders that there is a Mexican-American community, that this community is growing at a dramatic pace, and that Mexican-Americans must be provided educational services beyond the traditional delivery systems. These services should be offered close to the community they are intended to serve through community based organizations, community centers, and high schools.

Recommendations:

- That community colleges should provide developmental studies programs which include reading, writing, computational, and job-related English-as-a-second-language courses that assist Mexican-American students in preparing for technical occupational programs. To complement these courses, bilingual vocational instruction programs should be provided so that Mexican-Americans can enter the work force in a shorter period of time.

- That community colleges undertake concerted efforts to utilize federal vocational education funds to provide support services to Mexican-American students. These services may include special programs designed to increase their retention through the use of computer-assisted instruction, tutors, and direct faculty involvement.

- That community colleges should be charged with the responsibility of designing and implementing local human resource development strategies. These strategies should include a strong cooperative work experience program which provides Mexican-American students with on-the-job training, opportunities for eventual employment, and continued personal development. These strategies should also include articulation agreements between secondary vocational and post-secondary technical-occupational programs.

- That all staff development and in-service programs be required to have a component directed toward the Mexican-American culture.

- That the community college identify and nurture the future leadership of Mexican-American staff who aspire to greater leadership roles in vocational occupational arenas.

- That all colleges undertake to identify and develop local public and private sector support to supplement the educational fund shortcomings due to diminishing federal resources.

The community colleges have the best opportunity to provide educational services to the Mexican-American community. Through technical-occupational programs, community colleges can serve not only recent high school graduates, but those who are already in the work force. These individuals, who may be dropouts or who may need retraining or upgrading, may find occupational education programs in community colleges to be an important and accessible resource. As a catalyst for human resource development, occupational education programs must continue to be a high priority within Texas community colleges.

ARTICULATION

Articulation is the process by which two- and four-year colleges communicate and determine course

transferability. How effective articulation is between two- and four-year colleges in Texas, and how meaningful articulation is for Mexican-American students are questions that must be addressed by post-secondary institutions.

Most four-year schools have articulation agreements, although this frequently means that registrars simply familiarize themselves with other institutions' catalogs. This is hardly sufficient. It is also a known fact that the process for transferring from one college/university to another requires more coordination and planning than does initially enrolling in a four-year institution. Two-year college advisors are more important than even four-year university advisors in this regard, and should be given the resources to link effectively with senior institutions.

Mexican-American students are seeking higher education opportunities in greater numbers via two-year colleges. In Texas community colleges, the specific groups include more than half of all entering freshmen, half of all the women seeking higher education, and more minorities than the four-year colleges and universities combined.

Recent studies indicate that Mexican-Americans are not reaching education levels which will allow the country and/or State to competitively advance its goals in defense, research, technology, and industrial development. Despite increases in absolute numbers of Mexican-American high school graduates and college enrollees in recent years, only one in four freshmen intending to get a baccalaureate degree actually does so.

Therefore, practices and policies which discourage transfer students from entering senior institutions must be eliminated. These include non-existent agreements on transferability between the community college and upper level institution, lack of information systems for counselors who advise transfer students, complex admissions and registration procedures to which we subject students, and lack of financial assistance.

Recommendations:

- That statewide articulation policies and procedures must be established in order to maximize dialogue between two- and four-year institutions and to insure that two-year college students preparing for baccalaureate degrees can efficiently make the transition with minimal loss of course credit.

- That admission officers and advisors communicate about their overlapping responsibilities in a timely manner and with coordination responsibilities coming from the Texas Coordinating Board.

- That academic and administrative officers should make ease of transfer a high institutional priority, as they frequently do ease of admissions.

- That the Coordinating Board should continue to support projects and proposals which are geared toward the early identification of prospective Mexican-American transfers and transfers from other underrepresented groups and which provide assessment, advisement, and encouragement related to transfer. As necessary, the Coordinating Board should seek budget augmentation to engage in further outreach and collaborative activities to increase the transfer rate for Mexican-American students.

- That senior institutions should cooperate with community colleges with substantial numbers of Mexican-American students to develop early identification programs which promise to motivate such students to persist and transfer without loss of time or credit.

- That the Coordinating Board should seek the establishment of a staffing formula to fund outreach to community colleges, with special emphasis on outreach to Mexican-Americans.

- That each senior college/university should assure that Mexican-American transfer students receive appropriate assistance in making the transition from community colleges including orientation, academic advisement and, as appropriate, assistance in financial aid matters and diagnostic testing coupled with learning assistance.

- That each senior college/university should review and, as indicated, revise its services to Mexican-

American transfer students.

- That the Coordinating Board should seek additional support to institute and implement on every campus summer bridge programs for Mexican-American transfer students to orient them to the campus environment and provide academic assistance and advisement. Program design should recognize the time constraints of adult working students.
- That the Coordinating Board should take steps to assure that Mexican-American students transferring from a two-year college to a four-year insttitution receive adequate and timely financial support.
- That the Coordinating Board should seek an appropriation to provide "transition grants" to needy community college transfers for whom available aid resources are not suitable or adequate.
- That the Coordinating Board should provide for greater flexibility in the financial aid application process. It should take steps to minimize the hardships which may result when a needy student fails to apply for aid in a timely fashion. Examples of such actions include: deferment of fees until Pell Grant or other aid is made available and increased publicity about aid which is available at other than normal times.
- That senior institutions should join with Texas community colleges to establish a task force on financial aid articulation. Attention should be directed toward reduced paperwork, comparability of requirements and forms, sharing information and means for ensuring continuity of aid. The focus should be on structures wherein the senior campuses would develop agreements with their primary feeder community colleges.

REMEDIAL EDUCATION

Questions have been recently raised regarding the appropriateness of remedial education being part of the college curriculum. This issue was recently addressed by the Coordinating Board and it reaffirmed the need for compensatory education through passage of the following policy statement: Coordinating Board Regulations, Chapter 5, Subchapter I. APPROVAL OF ACADEMIC COURSES FOR STATE APPROPRIATIONS TO PUBLIC COMMUNITY COLLEGES, 5.173. *Compensatory Developmental or Remedial Education Courses.* "State funding should be provided for compensatory (developmental) education courses designed to fulfill the commitment of an admissions policy allowing the enrollment of disadvantaged students." At community colleges in Texas, remedial education is not only currently central to their mission, but it will also become even more important in addressing the issue of quality and access in light of emerging minority populations which may have been underserved by the public schools.

Remedial education is particularly important when one evaluates future educational needs in the changing demographics of the college-age population. Increasing numbers of adult women and minorities in Texas are accessing post-secondary education for the first time. Demographic evidence indicates that within the next ten to fifteen years the proportion of college age Mexican-Americans will increase in relation to the overall population. Further, demographic evidence suggests that the Mexican-American and other minority populations have attained lower educational levels than the population at large. Recent studies also show that among the general population, 30 percent of entering freshmen read below the 7th grade level and have concomitant low level writing and computation skills, it seems reasonable to assume that with the increasing Mexican-American, Black, and adult learner populations we will witness even more entering students in need of academic remediation. With this kind of education, the potential for these students to eventually succeed will be enhanced. Research further indicates that improvement in basic skills enhances chances for success in college level work. Therefore, it is apparent, that if we are to educate not only the present population but also the emerging Mexican-American population we must maintain, and in fact, increase our efforts in remedial education.

An additional factor to be considered in addressing the issue of remedial education is the fact that community colleges must respond as directed by statute to institute an open admissions policy which provides access to all members of the community. Without an appropriate educational response such as remedial education, this open door policy simply would reinforce previous policies of benign neglect. It is our respon-

sibility to the taxpayers who support us to provide a learning environment that will allow those who enroll to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available.

One central point that has been raised in the attack on remedial education has been the cost issue. There are those who say that remedial education is expensive, and indeed there are costs associated with such programs. However, focusing on the cost issue of remedial education by itself can be a shortsighted approach to cost effectiveness. All research suggests that those who are undereducated are also underemployed. The community at large suffers from this undereducation and underemployment in terms of lost industry to other states, loss of tax revenues, and other costs associated with low income and underemployment. Moreover, if we fail to address the educational needs of the undereducated, we are perpetuating a cycle of poverty and economic drains on the community and the State.

One alternative that has been proposed in addressing remedial education has been to deny state funding for such courses and leave it to the resources of the individual college. The problem here is that local resources are, in most cases, already stretched beyond reasonable limits. Another suggestion has been to deny credit for remedial education. This, however, ignores the financial situation of many minority students who do in fact enroll in community colleges. Many of these students receive financial aid and it is critical that such courses be awarded credit if they are to maintain their financial aid eligibility. It is a fact that the students most in need of remedial education are most often students who come from financially deprived backgrounds. Consequently denying these students credited, state-funded remedial education effectively denies them educational opportunity.

There is a growing awareness in the State and in the country of the increased need to better serve our undereducated adult population. The problem of adult illiteracy is clearly emerging as one of the central issues of the eighties. The economic and human costs of adult illiteracy are enormous, and there is much evidence to suggest that the community colleges, with their emphasis on education for the community, have an obligation to respond to this issue. Texas cannot afford to ignore this problem and instead of cutting back on remedial instruction, it should give serious consideration to increasing state funding support for higher education to enable us to extend our services in the area of remedial education.

Recommendations:

- That the Coordinating Board consider funding community colleges, on a reimbursement basis, for tutoring adult illiterates (those reading from 0-6 grade levels).
- That the concept of open admissions should be affirmed in order that students may access higher education and create options for their economic development.
- That the issue of remedial education and the current state statute mandating remedial and developmental education for community colleges should not be compromised.
- That the Texas Coordinating Board should continue to support state funding for remedial courses in order to assure access to higher education for minority and underrepresented populations.
- That remedial education courses should continue to carry college credit so that the financial aid opportunities available to students are not jeopardized.

GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP

What takes place in most formal organizations such as Texas colleges and universities on a daily basis is the result of policy formulated at the state and institutional levels. Furthermore, human behavior is directed by policy interpretation and the priority given to policy by executives. Policymakers and executives are supposed to represent the well-being of the majority and to protect the interest of the minority. In short, the governance function determines the goals and objectives of the organization and in turn the goals determine the nature and extent of the participation of its employees and clients.

There are sixteen statutory boards of governance of senior colleges and universities of which nine are responsible for more than one institution. The boards of these institutions have authority over general

policy, including personnel, financing of operations, program endorsement, and planning and support of physical facilities. Each board of the senior colleges and universities has nine members and all are appointed by the Governor with the advice and consent of the Senate.

The power and duties of all public community colleges are the same as those given to independent school districts, that is, management of business affairs, selection of teachers, and rights and power of taxation such as assessing property wealth, fixing tax rates, and issuing bonds. Consistent with independent school districts, boards of community and junior colleges are elected by their districts and these boards have from seven to nine members.

In 1977, of the sixteen senior college governing boards, only four had Mexican-Americans serving on them. Of the 126 board members, Mexican-Americans comprised 7 percent or a total of nine, with Pan American University having five of those members. According to the 1980 Census, Mexican-Americans comprised 19.3 percent of the state's population. In 1986, of the sixteen governing boards, only six have Mexican-Americans serving on them. Also, of the 135 board members, Mexican-Americans comprise 9.6 percent or a total of thirteen, with Pan American University continuing to have five of those members. It appears that the appointed representation of Mexican-Americans on governing boards continues to be underrepresented.

In 1977, of the 359 elected community and junior college board members only twenty were Mexican-Americans (5.6 percent). Laredo Junior College and Texas Southmost College each have five Mexican-American board members. In 1986, there are thirty-three elected Mexican-Americans out of 374 for a total of 8.8 percent. While the percentage of elected Mexican-Americans has slightly increased, there is still an underrepresentation. Moreover, when we compare the underrepresentation between appointed and elected Mexican-American board members, the appointed process does not fare better than the elected process, yet the appointed process should be an easier way to bring about equal representation.

The Coordinating Board consists of eighteen members who are appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Senate to overlapping six-year terms. As with senior colleges and universities and community/junior colleges, the board members select the Commissioner of Education (the president in the case of colleges/universities). The Coordinating Board's powers include: (a) recommendating policies concerning the establishment or discontinuance of public institutions; (b) creating public junior college districts; (c) developing programs, which include approval and disapproval of new degree programs; (d) financial planning, including formulas used by the Governor and Legislative Budget Board to determine legislative appropriations for the financing of public institutions of higher education; and (e) administering the Hinson-Hazlewood College Student Loan Program.

Chief executive officers are equally and in some cases more important than board members. It is the chief executive who interprets policy for implementation, helps to determine priorities, determines staff assignments, and allocates resources within the organization. Presently, Texas Tech and Pan American are the only four-year institutions in Texas with a Mexican-American as university president. At the community college level, similarly there are only three Mexican-Americans who are presidents, at San Antonio College, Tarrant County Junior College in Ft. Worth, and at Texas Southmost College in Brownsville.

Recommendations:

Through their actions, board members and chief executive officers can legitimize the importance of increasing the representation and nature of involvement of Mexican-Americans in Texas higher education institutions both as students and professionals (i.e., staff, faculty, administrators). Thus, it is recommended:

- That the Governor appoint more Mexican-Americans to boards to equal statewide Mexican-American representation.
- That since the majority of Mexican-American student enrollment is at the community college level (approximately 70 percent), it is crucial that boards select more Mexican-Americans as campus

presidents.

- That chief executives exert strong influence to eliminate underrepresentation by establishing priorities, hiring faculty, allocating resources, and implementing procedures which will bring about quality education for Mexican-Americans in particular and others as well. The leadership of each higher education institution can improve the access and retention of Mexican-American students and faculty.

CONCLUSION

The dramatic growth of the Mexican-American population, not only in Texas but across the nation, and the future dependence of the economic development of the State on its human resources instead of its present reliance on oil and minerals makes it imperative that the governance and leadership of Texas take action NOW so that the higher education community will be fully prepared to accommodate its Mexican-American constituency.

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